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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Coastal Protection in the Caspian

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1. Certain movable marine obstacles known as "chains" to the Soviet authorities are being laid by naval trawlers along the coast of the Caspian Sea. The purpose is to protect the marine oilfields of the Gulf of Baku, the region around the island of Artem, and the city of Alyaty (thirty kilometers to the south of Baku).
2. These so-called "chains" consist of a two to four series of nets, with a breadth of two to three kilometers. The series toward the outside are equipped with explosives, which detonate at the least contact. These "chains" are constructed and laid with the utmost secrecy, by the Soviet Navy.
3. These devices are nearly invisible. Only a few of them are indicated by buoys. As a result, vessels navigating in the affected waters have to be handled by naval pilots, using secret charts for navigation. When the laying of the new devices was beginning, a tanker is reported to have run into one of them by accident and been sunk.

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